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Nuclear Arms Control and the Future of U.S.-Soviet Relations

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Following is an address by Eugene V. Rostow, Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, before the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, Los Angeles, California, September 10, 1982.

My assignment is to contemplate the future of the Soviet-American relationship in the perspective of arms control—more particularly, in the perspective of our bilateral negotiations about nuclear weapons. To recall Dr. Johnson, nuclear arms control is one of those subjects which concentrate the mind. It is of special value in revealing the several realities of the Soviet-American relationship and the way in which they interact.

In attempting to carry out my assignment, I thought it would be useful to review the state of our nuclear arms negotiations with the Soviet Union—to report on where we are, and to peer through the glass darkly at the road ahead. As you know, two parallel Soviet-American negotiations are going on in Geneva. One deals primarily with Soviet intermediate-range nuclear weapons, those capable of being launched from the Soviet Union against targets in Western Europe, Japan, China, and the Middle East; the other deals with the intercontinental nuclear weapons on both sides. The talks on intermediate-range weapons, called the INF [intermediate-range nuclear forces] talks, began in November 1981, and are being conducted for us by Ambassador Paul H. Nitze. The START [Strategic Arms Reduction Talks] talks on nuclear weapons of intercontinental range began in June 1982 under Ambassador Edward L. Rowny.

We have agreed with the Soviet representatives that the details of the INF and START negotiations be kept confidential. But we have also made it clear to them that the Government of the United States has the duty to keep our people fully informed about the broad principles which govern our approach to the negotiations and the way in which they are developing. I have prepared my talk with full respect for these rules.

The INF and START talks are inextricably linked, for reasons both of security and of technology. The security reason for that linkage is so obvious that it is often taken to be self-evident and left unexplained. But the nuclear balance has been changing, and we can no longer take our traditional positions on these matters for granted. The political consequences of the changing nuclear balance should be faced head-on.

Looking back at the cycles of turbulence and stability since 1945, we have all come to realize, I think, that while the possibility of nuclear war can never be altogether excluded, especially in the case of countries governed by irrational political leaders, the principal significance of nuclear weapons is political. The political radiation of nuclear arsenals can be significant either for defense or for aggression—as a defensive deterrent, on the one hand, or as an aggressive instrument of political coercion, on the other. It is thus apparent that the INF and START talks involved the most fundamental issue of our foreign policy, the credibility of our

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security guaranties. Those guaranties all turn ultimately on the deterrent power of the American nuclear umbrella. The pressures of the Soviet race for nuclear supremacy during the last 10 years have intensified doubts about the continued effectiveness of the American nuclear deterrent—the rock on which the renaissance of the West since 1945 was built and the foundation for its security. Uncertainties on this basic point could lead to fatal miscalculations. A most important goal of our foreign policy as a whole, and thus of our arms control policy, is to restore full confidence in those guaranties on the part of friend and adversary alike.

The expansionist nature of Soviet foreign policy and the recent changes in the Soviet-American military balance—particularly with regard to nuclear weapons—directly challenge the major premise of modern American foreign policy. That premise is distilled from the harsh experience of two world wars which strong allied diplomacy could easily have prevented. It has been accepted by every President since 1945, and spelled out in long series of treaties, joint resolutions of the Congress, and other national commitments. Its essence is that the United States can no longer live in neutral isolation but must protect its interest in the world balance of power by preventing Soviet domination of Western Europe, Asia, or the Middle East at a minimum. The Concert of Europe which protected that American security interest for a century before 1914 does not exist. We can no longer take shelter behind the British fleet. If the job is to be done, we must take the lead in organizing the coalitions to do it. To recall the language of the North Atlantic Treaty under which NATO is established, and which is expressed in other security arrangements as well, an attack on these vital areas must also be considered an attack on the United States. In contemplating the future, every nation must take this permanent and immutable geopolitical interest of the United States fully into account.

Outside the government, Americans who write and speak about foreign policy may forget this ultimate truth and flirt nostalgically with the isolationist ideas of the 19th century. Occasionally the government of the day may do so for a time, under the pressure of events. But those who bear the responsibility of government cannot enjoy the luxury of escapism. The world should understand that the instincts for self-preservation of a politically mature people will always dominate American foreign policy in the end. As President Reagan has made clear, the United States will not retreat to "Fortress America" but will defend its alliances and interests throughout the world. What is at stake in the INF and START talks is nothing less than our capacity to carry out that policy through deterrence based on alliance solidarity: that is, through peaceful means and not by war.

The technical reason why the INF and START talks must be viewed together is equally simple. It is that intermediate- and intercontinental-range nuclear weapons do not constitute separate categories: Soviet weapons capable of hitting New York or Chicago could also be fired at London or Tokyo. There is, therefore, no way to evaluate the INF balance except in the START context. We cannot allow the whipsaw threat of Soviet INF and strategic forces to separate us from our allies and keep us from defending the security interests of the nation.

The United States is, therefore, closely coordinating the INF and START talks, which are based on the same analysis. Through these talks in tandem, we are trying to achieve the same goal—a radical reduction of the Soviet and American nuclear arsenals in a manner conducive to stability.

Review of Negotiating Efforts

Before we can consider how the INF and START talks are progressing, we must agree on the criteria to be applied in judging their utility. To that end, let me briefly recall the analysis from which our negotiating position is derived and the implications of the goal we are trying to achieve. President Reagan is determined to take full advantage of our arms control experience during the 1970s. That effort has required a reexamination of the role of nuclear weapons and the arms control doctrines of the United States and the Soviet Union.

How should we define what we are seeking through the INF and START talks? The place to begin, we concluded more than a year ago, is to take a fresh look at the nuclear weapon itself. We have been living with it since 1945. The early assumption that the nuclear weapon was a magic force for peace has long since faded away. Even when we had a monopoly of nuclear weapons, and then great nuclear superiority, we had to use conventional forces—and those alone—to counter a long cycle of aggression by the Soviets and their surrogates. Save in a few important situations of extreme tension, we found the doctrine of "massive retaliation" to be an empty threat.

Since the late 1950s, at least, the primary strategic goal of the Soviet program of expansion has been to achieve world dominance by separating Western Europe from the United States and Canada. To achieve this goal, the Soviet Union has been and is seeking to outflank Europe from the north and the south, thus bringing the entire Eurasian land mass under Soviet control and, on that basis, taking over Africa and the Middle East. That done, the Soviet leaders believe, Japan and the other nations of the Pacific basin would accept Soviet suzerainty as inevitable; the peoples of Europe would lose hope; and the United States would be isolated, with no choice but to aquiesce in Soviet hegemony. All our experience in our bilateral nuclear arms talks with the Soviet Union is consistent with this hypothesis. Soviet strategy in SALT I [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] and SALT II, seems to be dominated by two ideas: to divide the United States from its allies and to prevent the modernization of the American Armed Forces. These are the main Soviet themes in the negotiation as they are the main themes of Soviet arms control propaganda.

Since the end of the Second World War, the United States and its allies have never stopped trying to persuade the Soviet Union that this course was the classic road to disaster. Nor have they flagged in their efforts to convince the leaders of the Soviet Union that a constructive alternative was always available—the alternative of genuine East-West cooperation, based on respect by each side for the legitimate security interests of the other and for the rules of the U.N. Charter against aggression. To this end, with varying degrees of success, the allies sought to contain Soviet expansion and proposed a long series of agreements designed to induce the Soviet Union to pursue its ambitions in world politics only by peaceful means.

Among these proposals, those addressed to the nuclear menace have been of quite particular significance.

From the beginning of the nuclear age nearly 40 years ago, the American people and their government have been convinced—and rightly convinced—that nuclear weapons are revolutionizing both warfare and world politics and that extraordinary steps are required to protect civilization from the unthinkable disaster of nuclear war. Conventional war has profoundly damaged the fabric of civilization during this turbulent century. The consequences of nuclear war would be immeasurably worse.

The United States made its first proposal to eliminate the nuclear threat in 1946, when we had a monopoly of nuclear arms and nuclear technology. In the Baruch Plan we offered to put the whole of nuclear science under international control. Looking back, it is obvious that the Soviet refusal even to consider that offer was one of the most destructive turning points in the history of the cold war.

The offer of the Baruch Plan does not stand alone. During the 1950s, President Eisenhower proposed the "open skies" plan, which has had far-reaching influence even though it was not formally accepted. The first major step in the control of nuclear arms was achieved in 1963 in the Limited Test Ban Treaty. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty followed in 1968.

Beyond these agreements, there are treaties barring weapons of mass destruction from the Antarctic and from outer space and the cycle of agreements which are our primary concern today—the Soviet-American SALT agreements and the INF and START negotiations. SALT I comprised two agreements, the Interim Agreement limiting offensive strategic weapons, which expired in 1977, and the ABM Treaty, which severely restricts systems for intercepting and destroying ballistic missiles. The ABM Treaty is of indefinite duration. SALT I and SALT II disappointed the claims made for them and the expectations they generated. Against the background of the Soviet nuclear build-up under the SALT I Interim Agreement, SALT II would have sanctioned continued increases in Soviet nuclear capabilities to threaten world stability.

What is the moral of this cycle of experience for the policies President Reagan has proposed in the INF and START talks? First, we are more convinced than ever that the efforts of the United States since 1946 to eliminate the possibility of nuclear war were wise and necessary. They should be intensified, not relaxed or abandoned. Second, it is obvious that no impregnable wall can be erected between nuclear and conventional war. A nuclear stalemate will not be worth having if it is treated simply as a license for conventional wars of all against all.

In order to eliminate nuclear war, the nations must also eliminate conventional war: that is, the struggle to save mankind from nuclear catastrophe must be conceived as part of a wider struggle to establish world public order itself The issue is not colonialism, or capitalism, or communism, or democracy, or the so-called arms race. It is aggression. The motives for aggression are irrelevant. And the arms race is the symptom and consequence, not the cause, of the breakdown in world public order. We live in a small, interdependent, and dangerous world. In that world, our world with its ominous nuclear dimension, aggression should be inadmissible, and peace should be indivisible.

As President Reagan has said, we can no longer tolerate a "double standard" with regard to Soviet aggression or aggression by any other power. Both we and the Soviet Union must obey the same rules with regard to the international use of force—the rules to which we both agreed when we signed the U.N. Charter. Unless these neutral and universal principles are generally and impartially enforced, they will cease to have any influence on the behavior of states. In President Reagan's phrase, the nations must not merely condemn aggression; they must prevent it and enforce the rules against it.

Problems of INF and START Negotiations

I now turn to the specific problems of INF and START negotiations. A year ago a consensus emerged within the Administration on certain key propositions as the foundation for our negotiating approach in the two negotiations. The first and most important was that we should discard the premise that the United States and the Soviet Union shared the same view of nuclear weapons and the same goal for nuclear arms control negotiations. Ten years ago most Americans took that hypothesis for granted. Today it cannot be entertained at all. Officials used to assure us that the Soviet Union was only interested in equality, recognition as a great power, and a place in the sun and that when it achieved parity with the United States it would stop enlarging its armed forces. No one can say that after what happened during the 1970s.

For the United States, the only acceptable use for nuclear arms is in defense of our supreme national interests and those of our allies against the use of nuclear weapons and other forms of aggression. Our nuclear arsenal is defensive in character, and its mission is to deter aggression by presenting a visible and credible capacity to retaliate.

It is now obvious that the Soviet Union marches to a different drummer. While we in the West have been primarily concerned with deterring both conventional and nuclear attacks, Soviet doctrine and forces emphasize the ability to fight and win a nuclear war. Of course, the Soviet Government would prefer to have the fruits of military victory without having to wage war. To achieve that end, it believes, the nuclear superiority it is trying so hard to attain would be a political force of overpowering influence—the ultimate instrument of coercion and intimidation. The function of Soviet military superiority is to paralyze the American nuclear deterrent by threatening to overwhelm it, and thus make Soviet aggression with conventional forces possible. More than 75% of the Soviet strategic nuclear force consists of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)—swift, accurate, and extremely destructive first-strike weapons which could destroy missiles deployed in hardened silos. Less than one-third of the American force consists of ICBMs. In addition, the Soviet Union has an intermediate-range ballistic missile force which, as yet, has no American counterpart. The Soviets currently have deployed at least 324 SS-20 launchers, 265 SS-4s, and 15 SS-5s. They have 1,232 warheads in all. With one refire

missile per launcher, these intermediate-range missiles may have over 2,000 nuclear warheads, almost all of which can reach West European targets. The balance, all deployed on mobile SS-20 launchers, are now targeted from eastern Siberia. Given the transportability and range of the SS-20, all of these could be moved within reach of Europe. The United States has no weapons at all in this class. Partially to counter this threat, our Pershing II intermediate-range ballistic missile and ground-based cruise missile are in development and are scheduled for modest deployment in Europe late in 1983.

The Soviet lead in ground-based intermediate-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles is one of the most serious foreign policy problems we face. This advantage gives the Soviet Union the potential to destroy all of Europe or Japan and many targets in other parts of the world at a time when a preemptive first strike with its intercontinental ballistic missiles could in theory also destroy all our ICBM force, that portion of our submarines that are in port, and those of our bombers that are at their bases.

The combination of these doomsday possibilities is a recipe for nuclear coercion that could split our alliances and leave us isolated in the Western Hemisphere. Henry Kissinger deepened Western anxiety about the nuclear imbalance a few years ago with his celebrated comment that great powers do not commit suicide on behalf of their allies. Former President Nixon has now made nuclear anxiety in this sense more acute. In an article in the *New York Times* on August 19, 1982, he says:

> The Soviet Union's achievement of superiority in land-based nuclear missiles has made our nuclear strength no longer a credible deterrent against Moscow's creeping expansionism, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. We will not again be able to use the threat of that power as President Kennedy did in the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, when we had a 15-to-1 advantage, or even as I was able to do during the Arab-Israeli war in 1973, when our advantage was far less but still formidable. Even if we restore the balance of those nuclear forces, we will not fully restore their deterrent effect for such purposes. A threat of mutual suicide is simply not credible.

Political anxieties about the American nuclear umbrella would exist even if Dr. Kissinger and President Nixon had not spoken. They are what Chancellor Schmidt has called "subliminal" emanations of the Soviet nuclear arsenal and the state of the Soviet-American nuclear balance. They are there because we allowed the nuclear balance to deteriorate during the 1970s. We shall have to live with the consequences of that mistake until the balance is restored by some combination of American force modernization and arms control agreements.

The fears generated by the changing nuclear balance are manifest in many forms—in the antinuclear demonstrations and other movements for unilateral disarmament, isolationism, and accommodation, on the one hand, and for nuclear proliferation, on the other. If these movements prevail, here, in Europe, and in Asia, we shall wake up one day soon in a different world.

In the light of these considerations, President Reagan decided to make the removal of the destabilizing Soviet advantage in ground-based ballistic missiles the first goal of our nuclear arms control effort and the first aspect of the problem for us to take up with the Soviet Union. We were slightly ahead of the Soviet Union in the number of warheads on deployed ICBMs in 1972.

In 1982 the Soviets have a lead in this crucial area of approximately three to one. It follows that they have the theoretical capacity to execute a preemptive first strike by destroying our ICBMs and other nuclear forces with a fraction of their forces, holding the rest in an ominous reserve which could paralyze our remaining strategic forces. When the Soviet intermediate-range ballistic missiles are counted, the Soviet advantage in this category becomes even higher. Until this Soviet advantage in nuclear forces is eliminated, it will not be possible to achieve political stability.

The *New York Times* put the issue well in an editorial entitled "How Much Is Enough?" on April 11, 1982. The task of arms control diplomacy, the *Times* said, is to allow the United States to maintain deterrence "which has kept the industrial world at peace for the longest stretch in history" and "to forbid the weapons which defy deterrence .... That done, the arms race can subside. Unless it is done, there will never be enough."

U.S. Approach to INF Talks

This view of the matter is the basis for our approach to the INF and START talks. What we are seeking in these talks is to establish nuclear stability at equal and much lower levels of force—a posture on each side which would permit us to deter both nuclear war and other forms of aggression against our supreme interests. Such a policy would deny the Soviet Union the capacity for nuclear blackmail based on its present superiority in ground-based intermediate-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The U.S. position in these talks was explained by President Reagan in his speech of November 18, 1981. During the first round of the INF talks beginning in November 1981, the U.S. delegation laid out the broad priniciples underlying the U.S. approach, defined the elements of an agreement which would take into account the legitimate interests of the two sides, and in February 1982 presented the text of a draft treaty which would implement those elements. The Soviet side elaborated somewhat on the positions that had been set forth by Chairman Brezhnev before the negotiations had begun and offered its criticism of the U.S. position. Mr. Brezhnev's plan has two elements: A moratorium for the duration of the negotiations and a program of reductions based on the assumption that both sides are now equal in intermediate-range missiles. The Soviets have proposed a limit of 300 "systems" for each side by 1990.

During the second round, beginning in May, the Soviet delegation presented a draft text of an agreement which would embody the Soviet position. The United States offered its criticisms of the Soviet position and a full analysis of the issues between the sides.

As the third round of the INF negotiations is scheduled to begin at the end of this month, it is appropriate to review some of the major issues as they have emerged. You will remember that in 1976 the Soviet Union began the deployment of a new mobile and MIRVed [multiple independently-targetable reentry vehicle] intermediate-range missile system—the SS-20—as a replacement for the older fixed single-warhead systems on which it had relied for many years. The SS-20s are highly accurate; can strike all important targets in Europe, even from locations in the middle of Siberia; and have a short time of

flight. They represent a threat different in kind, not just in degree, from the systems they have been replacing.

In 1979 the NATO nations unanimously agreed that it was necessary to counter this threat unless it was withdrawn. It was decided that the United States should move to deploy in Europe two somewhat comparable systems, the Pershing II ballistic missile and the BGM-109G ground-launched cruise missile and simultaneously seek negotiations with the Soviet Union for the limitation of comparable systems on both sides. On November 18, 1981, President Reagan proposed that both the United States and the U.S.S.R. entirely forego such systems—the zero/zero solution.

The Soviet Union has not yet gone beyond its position that the INF talks are exclusively concerned with stability in the European theater. The United States insists that the INF problem is global and that the cause of world peace would not be advanced by exporting the Soviet INF nuclear advantage to Asia.

The Soviet Union also continues to claim that the United States and the Soviet Union have approximately the same number of intermediate-range nuclear weapons in the European theater and, therefore, that the NATO decision to deploy 572 Pershing II and ground-based cruise missiles in Europe is "provocative" and "destabilizing." The Soviet claim rests on two untenable propositions—first, that the British and French nuclear forces must be counted with the American forces and, second, that American bombers, submarine-launched missiles, and cruise missiles should be treated as equivalent to the Soviet SS-20. The Soviet calculations go beyond even these errors. In order to demonstrate the supposed equality of the two INF forces in Europe, the Soviet Union must count all American weapons as relevant—including American dual-purpose aircraft, as well as FB-111s, all of which are located in the United States—and also exclude many categories of the Soviet arsenal.

The principal issue between the sides centers on the treatment to be accorded the SS-20s and comparable missiles on the Soviet side, and the Pershing II and BGM-109G on the United States side. Whereas the United States draft treaty would ban them on both sides, the Soviet treaty would eliminate them only on the U.S. side; the Soviet side would be permitted to have up to 300 launchers for such missiles in the European portion of the Soviet Union and an unlimited number in the far-eastern portion of the Soviet Union.

In addition to this wholly one-sided treatment proposed by the Soviets as to the central issues, their proposed treaty would have other unequal effects. The Warsaw Pact has some 7,000 nuclear-capable aircraft in Europe, of which some 2,500 are assigned to nuclear combat roles. NATO has approximately one-third of the latter number; almost all U.S. nuclear-capable planes located in Europe are dual capable. The U.S. contribution to the conventional defense of Europe is almost wholly dependent on such dual-capable planes. Yet, the Soviet draft treaty would have the effect of forcing the almost total withdrawal from Europe of such U.S. dual-capable aircraft, while not affecting most Soviet dual-capable aircraft.

This effect results in part from the Soviet proposal that U.K. and French nuclear-capable systems be included under the aggregate ceiling limiting U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range missiles and aircraft. This proposal is both technically flawed and inequitable in principle. First, most of these U.K. and French forces are not, in fact, intermediate-range (or what the Soviets call medium-range); they are SLBM [submarine-launched ballistic missile] forces identical with Soviet and U.S. SLBM forces. Most of the remainder are nuclear-capable aircraft. The Soviet predominance in intermediate-range, nuclear-capable systems in Europe is so great that there would be no justification for compensation to the Soviet Union for British and French nuclear forces even if they were under NATO command.

Beyond this technical flaw, the claim of the Soviet Union for nuclear forces equal to or superior to those of all other nations combined would be unjustified. It is a demand for absolute security for one country, which is tantamount to absolute insecurity for all other countries. In short, it is a Soviet demand for hegemony. This will never be acceptable to the United States.

This Soviet demand is inappropriate in another way as well. The INF negotiations are bilateral negotiations between the United States and the U.S.S.R.; neither the United Kingdom nor France has authorized either the United States or the Soviet Union to negotiate on their behalf. On the contrary, they have stated their refusal to have their forces limited or compensated for in negotiations between us. From their standpoint, their nuclear forces are strategic; they represent their last line of defense in a potentially threatened position.

There are a number of other important issues separating the two sides. Much progress, however, has been achieved by the two delegations in sorting out what is important to each side and illuminating the way to possible solutions. A serious atmosphere has evolved in the INF talks. It is clear that a potentiality exists for accommodating the analytic concepts used by both sides. What is not yet clear is whether the Soviet Union is willing to accept agreement based exclusively on the principle of deterrence.

U.S. Position in START

The first 2-month round of the START negotiations has now been completed. They are, of course, at an earlier stage than the INF talks, but the atmosphere is correspondingly serious and businesslike.

The U.S. position was outlined in President Reagan's speech at Eureka College on May 9, 1982. Its essential idea is that of equal ceilings at much lower levels of force—ceilings that would strengthen deterrence and promote stability by significantly reducing the Soviet lead in ICBMs. Coupled with the dismantling of the Soviet intermediate-range ballistic missiles proposed in the INF talks, such a result would enable us to maintain an overall level of strategic nuclear capability sufficient to deter conflict, safeguard our national security, and meet our commitments to allies and friends.

To achieve this goal, the President announced a practical, phased approach to the negotiation, like the procedure being used in the INF talks. It is based on the principle that the two arsenals should be equal both in the number of weapons and in their destructive capacity. "The focus of our efforts," the President said, "will be to reduce significantly the most destabilizing systems—ballistic missiles, the number of warheads they carry, and their overall destructive potential."

While no aspect of the problem is excluded from consideration and the United States will negotiate in good faith on any topics the Soviets wish to raise, the United States proposes that the first topic to be considered in the negotiations should be the reduction of ballistic missile warheads to equal levels at least one-third below current numbers. Both ground-based and submarine-launched ballistic missiles are included in this proposal. No more than half these warheads would be deployed on land-based missiles. This provision alone should achieve substantial reductions in missile throw-weight. Our proposal calls for these warhead reductions, as well as significant reductions in the number of deployed missiles, to be achieved as quickly as possible.

In a second phase, closely linked to the first, we will seek equal ceilings on other elements of U.S. and Soviet strategic forces, including equal limits on ballistic missile throw-weight at less than current U.S. levels.

In both START and INF, the United States has made it clear that verification measures capable of assuring compliance are indispensable. For those provisions that cannot be monitored effectively by national technical means of verification, we will be proposing cooperative measures, data exchanges, and collateral constraints that should provide the necessary confidence in compliance. The Soviet Union has indicated that it will be prepared where necessary to consider cooperative measures going beyond national technical means. This is an encouraging sign. Without satisfactory verification provisions, meaningful agreements will be impossible to achieve.

The Soviet Union has attacked our START proposals as unfair, on the ground that they call for unequal reductions—indeed, that they call for "unilateral Soviet disarmament." It is hardly obvious why this is the case. Each side now has approximately 7,500 ballistic missile warheads. Under the American proposal, each side would have to reduce to no more than 5,000, of which no more than 2,500 could be on ICBMs. True, the Soviet Union would have to dismantle more ICBM warheads than we would in order to comply with the ICBM sublimit, while we might have to dismantle more submarine-based missiles. But that is the point. There is nothing inequitable about an equal ceiling which strengthens deterrence and stability. It is discouraging that this feature of the American proposal was not mentioned in a recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* by General Starodubov, a senior member of the Soviet START delegation. By omitting any reference to SLBMs, General Starodubov gives the reader an incomplete version of the American position.

If the INF and START talks are successful, the huge Soviet advantage in ground-based ballistic missiles will be eliminated. These alone are the weapons which "defy deterrence." If the Soviet Union accepts nuclear arms control agreements based on the principle of "deterrence only," which is the heart of our negotiating position, a Soviet first strike would be impossible without expending most of the Soviet force. Given such a change in the balance of the two forces, we could hope to protect our ICBM force effectively. Then—but only then—nuclear tension would diminish.

There is another aspect of our START negotiating position which deserves emphasis. As President Reagan's speech at Eureka College makes clear, the American approach to START is directed in the first instance at the most destabilizing weapons and proposes a new unit of account as the basis for a treaty dealing with them and all other intercontinental nuclear weapons. That unit of account, replacing the "deployed launchers" used in SALT I and SALT II, would compare the Soviet and American forces both in the number of weapons on each side and their destructive capacity. The measure of destructive capacity we propose is that of throw-weight—the maximum weight of weapons a missile can propel. What we are seeking is an equal throw-weight limit for each side at levels below the present American level. This goal would require a greater reduction on the Soviet side than on the American side. But the Soviet Union can hardly claim a right to preserve an advantage which could only be used for intimidation or aggression. Nor is there anything inequitable in the idea of unequal reductions to achieve equality. The United States made larger reductions than any other power under the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922.

The Need for Real Nuclear Parity

If we yield in the end and wearily settle for INF and START agreements which allow the Soviet Union to preserve its overwhelming advantage in ballistic missiles, we should find ourselves confronting former President Nixon's bleak prognosis. Such an outcome would legitimize the superiority in intermediate-range and intercontinental ground-based ballistic missiles that the Soviet Union has achieved under SALT and authorize it to consolidate and improve that advantage. On that basis, the Soviet leaders would be justified in continuing to believe that they could translate their nuclear edge over the United States into political and diplomatic hegemony.

This would be a most dangerous illusion—the kind of illusion from which major wars have arisen in the past. President Reagan's approach to INF and START calls on the Soviet Union to join us in recognizing that the quest for hegemony is the greatest possible threat to the peace and that real nuclear parity between the Soviet Union and the United States—parity, that is, in deterrent capacity—is the most feasible foundation for a joint program to establish world political stability based on the rule of law.

The state of world politics does not justify the apocalyptic gloom of those who believe that resisting Soviet expansionism would be suicidal and, therefore,

counsel an American retreat to isolation and submission. The Soviet drive for unlimited power faces insuperable obstacles. It confronts deep-seated economic and social problems at home and the ineradicable hostility of the nations it is seeking to rule abroad. It has suffered major defeats in peripheral campaigns, especially in the Middle East. And what Mr. Brezhnev has called "the crisis" in Poland is one of supreme importance to the future of the Soviet Union. Even the magnitude of its nuclear arsenal cannot protect the Soviet Union from the deeply rooted yearnings for freedom shared by people everywhere. Finally, and most important of all, the Soviet Union, like every other country, must accept the implacable logic of the nuclear weapon. As Khrushchev once said, the nuclear weapon does not respect the difference between socialism and capitalism.

Foreign policy is not a mathematical exercise like chess. Like every other human enterprise, it must take account of the unforeseen. Chance, heroism, passion, and faith have greater influence in human affairs than the grim calculus of the nuclear equation.

The ultimate issue of Soviet-American relations since 1917 is defined in the nuclear arms talks with chilling clarity. It is whether the Soviet Union is a state like the others, willing to live as a member of the society of nations and to abide by its rules or, on the other hand, whether the Soviet Union will persist in the suicidal view that its mission is to lead a crusade to spread the "True Faith" by the sword. When the issue is raised with Soviet diplomats or professors, they say, "You are asking us to change a foreign policy rooted in the nature of our society and state." To that claim, the only possible answer is, "Not at all. So far as we are concerned, you can preach the gospel of communism as much as you like. But the rest of the world cannot tolerate the use of aggression to achieve it."

If the leaders of the Soviet Union are as rational and cautious as they are supposed to be, they should want a period of peace and stability in their relationship with the West. On the whole, I think they will. Like all his modern predecessors, President Reagan has made it clear to the Soviet leaders that he would welcome such a change and cooperate fully in making it a reality. ■

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